

Democracy and Media Diversity

You are now about to make a decision, on June 2, which will determine the diversity, or lack of it, in our media for years to come. This decision is being made under great secrecy, without any opportunity for the public to be made aware of precisely what is being decided. This is unheard of and unacceptable. From what little information the public has been able to glean about this upcoming decision, it appears that it is your intention (with the exception of Commissioners Adelstein and Copps) to decide that the media should become even more consolidated than they have recently become.

Neither the public interest nor our democracy are well served by the ever-increasing consolidation of the media, as has been occurring, most particularly since the Telecommunications Act of 1996. To continue along this same path will only further diminish the diversity of voices heard in our media. The cultural and ethnic diversity of America is greater than ever before and we are in greater need than ever before to have that diversity reflected in our media.

A multitude of media outlets, whether radio, television, print media, or the Internet, owned by a handful of large corporations do not constitute diversity of choices or perspectives any more than we have “choices” simply because the Starbucks stores that sprout up at every corner now offer us Mocha Malt Frappuccinos.

Real democracy demands real diversity. This is the mandate of the FCC. Live up to your mandate.

Respectfully,

Lisa Maxwell